

# 2005 Report of Accomplishments (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005)

## Thurston Conservation District



### Most Significant Natural Resource Accomplishment

- We sold just over 41,000 native plants to 752 customers during our 2005 plant sale event, which equals restoration of 5.6 miles of stream bank, based on a 50 foot buffer.

### Mission of the Thurston Conservation District

- To conserve, sustain, and protect our natural resources for the people of Thurston County through: rural and urban partnerships, fostering volunteerism, cooperation, education, leadership, and technical and financial assistance.



### Natural Resource Improvements in 2005 - Summary

- 16.5 miles of in-stream habitat and 1,907 acres of upland was restored, protected or enhanced.
- 4,454 feet of stream bank was planted with natives through TCD grant programs.
- Of the 680 recommended BMPs during this reporting period, 442 (65%) were implemented.

### Water Quality Implementation

- We loaned equipment to 59 cooperators to assist in implementation of best management practices.
- 5.5 miles of riparian fencing was installed to protect water quality and habitat.
- Soil tests and analysis were provided to 95 landowners.

### Basic Funding

- The regional Envirothon was hosted at the Nisqually Refuge. Ten high school teams participated.
- We hosted our first annual Open House. We shared our accomplishments, 2005 budget & work plan, and presented awards to cooperators who have excelled at implementing their Conservation Plans.
- Participated in the development of TMDLs in the Nisqually, Deschutes, Eld and Totten watersheds.

### Local Funding

- We enrolled 45 landowners within the shellfish protection districts into the Shellfish Watershed Pledge Program. These landowners implemented 364 pledge items. In addition, these "pledgers" implemented 23% more pledge items than they originally committed to.
- Our local funding supports payment of our dues to the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) and allows our district supervisors and staff to attend training and meetings/conferences.
- Provided overhead support for our administrator, office assistant, and accountant.
- A countywide in-person and vote by mail election for District Supervisor was conducted.
- District staff provided 1,900 hours of technical assistance to landowners not covered by a grant program.
- Local funding enabled the District to secure numerous grants to benefit natural resource conservation in the County. Every dollar of assessment funds enabled the District to bring in 182% more funds through grants from the Conservation Commission, DOE, Interagency Committee, and both the State and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services.
- Nearly half of the South Sound GREEN program was funded with assessment funds. Over 1450 Thurston County teachers and students were educated through this program. Water quality was monitored at 26 sites and macroinvertebrates were monitored at 12 sites on a total of 21 streams.

### Puget Sound/Water Quality

- We sold just over 41,000 native plants to 752 customers during our 2005 plant sale event.
- We hosted an "information tent" at the sale, where 10 cooperating agencies provided assistance to landowners during the plant sale event.

### Professional Engineering

- Our cluster engineer provided technical assistance to four of our cooperators which has led to the planning of 3 implementation projects to be completed in the next biennium.

### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

4,800 natives were planted on 9.9 acres and 6100 plant protectors were installed to ensure success. We experienced an 85% survival rate on plantings installed over the past year.

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## **Livestock/Dairy**

- Assistance was provided to 15 Thurston County dairies, including fall nitrate testing.
- Developed 3 new Nutrient Management Plans and two Plans were updated to reflect changes in operations on Thurston County dairies. Four dairies were certified.
- Participated in the Winter Growth study with WSU. The results of this study were incorporated into the development of the revised Nutrient Management Standard in Western Washington. Thurston CD and WSU partnered on this project over the past 4 years.
- 2,100 feet of underground line was installed, 2,380 acres of nutrient management was implemented, two roof runoff systems were constructed, irrigation water management was implemented on 1,530 acres, and one manure storage system was constructed.
- The Foster dairy received the “Commercial Farm of the Year” presented by Thurston CD.

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## **Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration**

- Seven planting plans were prepared, four of which have been implemented during this period.
- Invasive plant species were removed on four sites.
- 17 landowners received habitat conservation assistance.
- Four projects covering 6.7 acres along 7,950 feet of stream were planted under a DOE grant.
- A dam that blocked 1.33 miles of salmon habitat was removed and 300 feet of stream channel was reconstructed and a planting was done along the site utilizing Salmon Recovery Funding Board money.
- 19,400 square feet of riparian zone was planted with the assistance of 141 volunteer hours.

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## **Small Farm Programs**

- 17 small farm plans were developed.
- The 3-Bridges Farm received the “Small Farm of the Year” award, presented by the Thurston CD.
- 442 BMPs were implemented.
- We produced a handbook entitled “Rural Living in Thurston County” which introduces landowners to the experience and considerations when residing in a rural community.

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## **Community Collaboration & Coordination**

- We provided office space and support staff to the WACD Executive Director and WSU Native Plant Salvage Project Coordinator.
- We partnered with the Thurston County Commissioners, Washington Department of Health, WSU University and poultry operators to deliver a workshop on fly control.
- We partnered with WSU Extension to provide a booth at the Thurston County Fair.
- We participated in the Environmental Education Technical Advisory Committee (EETAC). This group collaborates to provide educational programs throughout the community and prevents duplication of efforts.
- We provided \$124,000 to fund implementation activities in the Henderson & Nisqually Shellfish Protection Districts.
- Partnered with the Nature Conservancy to provide knotweed education & outreach in the Scatter Creek watershed.
- Served on the Natural Resources Youth Camp Board of Directors and provided instruction at the camp.
- We served as the Lead Entity for WRIA 14, prioritizing habitat improvement project applications for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funds.

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## **Marketing/Outreach & Education**

- 209,685 contacts were made through our website, newspaper articles, technical assistance, plant sale, events, and information booths. Of those, 2,012 were direct one-on-one contacts.
- We sponsored the replacement of one of the original Olmsted trees on the Capital Campus. (See photo below)
- We hosted a total of 9 workshops and provided 28 community presentations.
- Our website was updated at least monthly with useful information such as BMPs, West Nile, composting, and local community events. We sponsor a “community calendar” on our website, where other entities may request to have their events posted.

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

